Dr. Paul L. Hoch, Ph. D. (Ret.) 1/27/73

Glad to hear you made it. I'd been wondering. Even Jim Schmitt had been. He called me not to long ago, about 3 a.m. his time.

How is retirement before 30? Guess it is great when you have a horn to tootle.

Is there a special kind of social security for early retirement, sort of an incentive program to make room for old folks (or fogies)?

Be of good cheer. Be glad you are not, for example, a middle-aged chemist. Things are really rough on them. Especially the good ones.

In my generation, right after World War II, many of the excess brains became Laundramatists (not the same as today's Mexican Laundries). They were "formers" also. Like former government employees, former war heros.

The world moves faster these days. Here you are, just ready to start out, freshly and properly prepared for starting out, and lo!, you too are a former and a retiree.

You are even talking like a former author before you begin to write. That is a bit too fast. For an old fogie, anyway.

I hope the former does not include "employed".

The only "former physicist" I ever knew before was a little older than you. He taught me in high school and each summer, conditoons and remuneration in teaching being what they were in those days, he became a "former physicist" and sold aluminumwear.

Got any bauxite out there?

If you say "for the past few months I haven't been in touch with anyone" as either a complaint or a confession, you are also a former rational person. There is almost nobody left to be in touch with. Or any reason for it. But this you'll have to learn for yourself.

When you first mentioned that you intended doing a book, I made some recommendations about the approach and the basic subject matter. I remember them, which I can't say for too many things, and I still think they were correct. I hope you'll think it through for many reasons. One is that the book you do should be different than other books, done or started. Another is there is much of worth to be done that hasn't been done. Still another is that placing any book on anything close to the subject is more difficult than ever, and despite what some of the learned pontificators have pronounced, it was never other than difficult for a good back. Only trash had it easy, and even all of those didn't. Your book should also be suited to your approach. I told you then your focus should be on the FBI and I believe it still. There has not been a really good book except a couple of the less dishonest Confessions Of a Former FBI Agents. Now that Hoover is gone, I hope to the reward he has earned, the Bureau itself needs some examination. You and I each have and can see the most definitive study of the agency, its workings, thinking, etc. The meticulous approach of a physicist who tootles a little on the side might find a market.

You should really understand the market situation, for it is very bad. Howard, for example, did what I am certain is a good book. That Sylvia raved means nothing, because she raves over all young men, beginning with Epsteink. That Tinl thompson, who is really a baddie at heart, like it means much more, That his University Press went for it is significabt. They had Tink read it. Tink made recommendations for changes. Howard spent a summer making them, had the thing retyped, and now the University Press won't even read it.

I remain bogged down in too many things I'd prefer to have nothing to do with but can't escape, so I don't carry this further now. I will later if you want. But unless you just want to put stuff together to leave as a study for some distant future, I suggest that your thinking begin with what can be possible. Another book that can be called an assassination book isn't possible today. (However, I hear that Lane and Freed of the group out there that did The Glasshouse Tapes, have a deal for an assassination novel. Their serious work qualifies for that form, alas.)

FOI: I think I may win that appeal. I think that is the only reasonable explanation for delay in the decision. The judges want to survive the present Supreme Court and put it in a way that can achieve widest possibility acceptability in legal circles. It would have been easy to reject the appeal and that would have required no great effort in drafting a decision. However, if I win, I am also certain the DJ will go to the Supreme Court, and they will still be writing letters saying they await that decision. There are many cases

I could file. I have not been serious about any I don't think could be won under the law. However, I have not filed any because I think that with the changed politico-legal situation it is difficult not to be irresponsible. By coincidence, when I worked with Jim yesterday, he asked if I'd heard from you and remembered what I'd written you last on FOI when he did not have time. I gather his feelings are unchanged. Now it is getting popular and all sorts of foolish suits are being filed by the well-intentioned. With this court, the propsects for any are poor. I am in a better position that most because at least two of the Justices should disqualify themselves: Rehnquist sat on my stuff in Justice and I filed against Powell with the Senate Judiciary Committee. With these plusses, I have been very careful. I urge the same course upon you. That and patience, meaning not to do anything until there is a reasonable basis for considering the time is right. In this I would include not before it is necessary.

In your case, I think you should wait until you hear from Justice after the CA rules in my case because I picked the case to appeal with care and there can be no better one on that exemption in the immediate future. They will be in a worse position to refuse you if I win. Picking the right case of those you have initiated will then be very important if you are willing to try a new and idfferent approach: a civil suit for damages. There is a legal basis for it and there are in your state a number of lawyers who might be willing to try. When that time comes, I'll spell it out from something in my possession.

Meanwhile, content yourself with making a record, if there is any needing making. You will find that as you organize your material and your thoughts about it you will also be putting your head together on this.

You never responded to my suggestion long ago, what to do if there is a disagreement. I think if between us we can't reconcile differences, as I then said, the one who was not first should defer to the one who went after whatever it is first. It is not that each of us will not let the other have what he has. There are other and I think compelling reasons. In the one case I can think of, I take a much better record forward, and it is an area where, with any luck, I will have an added record that would be relevant in a way. I have proofs of some of the spying on me and much first-hand information you do not. I will also be before a court, meaning a district, to which DJ has repeatedly lied and from which I have a real rarity, a summary judgement. It is a good record, Paul, an unusual one. Other things, which can change, are also going. There are several influential news people now turned on on the subject. One of the major media had their counsel consult with me on this a while back to see if they could help in any way. The is only one instance.

Above all, I think we should be exceedingly careful not to file cases that can establish bad precedents. The best thing that happened to us with Nichols is that the Supreme Court did not take his case.

So, lets be patient, careful, and in close touch. There is also such a thing as winning and getting nothing. This is Bud's record. That is worse than futility.

Jim, who begins both very good and very bright, has learned much. He will be rather busy for a while and there is nobody else whose legal judgement I would consider on these kinds of cases. Not that I know. He may be awaiting his first client, but he is sound. He has done magnificent work on the Ray petition habeas corpus and subsequent papers. He and I have done all of it. Bud remains but a liability. Sometimes Jim barely talks to him, but this please hold in confidence. Jim has had to learn for himself and he has. I think he should concentrate on this situation, with as little interruption as possible, because I feel that success in that case can have a very good influence on everything.

Jim has the Warren transcript from Public TV, if you want it. I have a copy from him. He got it through Jerry, who is bowing out, thank God. Except for Cyril and the CTIAs, all of them seem to have. Cyril does and says crazier things all the time. Howard was here during the holidays and went over those of my files. It seems I understated considerably from what he found and I'd forgotten. Even Bob Smith, who is a genuine paranoid in this field, was disturbed enough to make a trip to Pgh and even Bud is talking against Cyril. Is this reflection of bad enough? He make Garrison loom modest, reasonable and temperate.

Consult with whomever you will, but at this juncture, I would encourage discrimination and understanding. Most are hungup and need self-justification. You's have to understand this and be able to decide what it means in what is recommended to you.

Most don't have the knowledge to give you advice. Except for you, Howard and me, on fact everyone is out of date. I think that on advice alone, if he would do it, or rather if they would, the Whites would be ever so much better than Sylvia, bright as she is. She has never been rational in some areas, one of which is publishing. If you doubt this, you can go over my files. It is there. She thinks you are some kind of agent anyway. She is stubborn and will not show it, but I feel she ll never trust you. She would have too much trouble with herself if she did.

If you talk to Lifton, they you, too, are nuts.

Howard is very young, but he is truly gifted, sensitive and bright. Mature beyond his years and flexible. If he can find time, I recommend you consult with him.

Gary has to be really hungup. He got careless and sent as proof of his probity proof that he was very dishonest. Worse than that, he looks back on the Ned thing with doubts about himself. Since then I got a notion and did some checking. I find that Ned is on the board of a CIA foundation, with Katzenbach, who you should remember as the CIA's apologist. Ka. is one of those he used to lean on Marshall, who didn't require any leaning on, as Ned never understood.

Mary's personal problems are quite serious. Jim says she is moving to Austin, to work for the governor. She is mad at me because I told Arch off when it was overdue. Mary has a very sharp mind, sees and suspects where I do not, but is blinded by her politics. She can say any kind of vile thing about another reactionary, like Arch, but not somebody she regards as a "liberal". Aside from personal experience and the Archives files on him, all of what I know of Arch comes from her. He did a very dirty thing to me and I said what I felt I should.

So, there are not, in my view, many places you can turn for advice that can mean anything to you. Aside from the accidental error to which we are none immune, you'll not make any bad mistakes. You may wind up wanting editorial aid, but that is no sweat. And you should eliminate all you can as you ponder your approach and thesis before you seek counsel on them. I think at this point the experts will not be the best to whom to turn, with no more than two exceptions probable.

Above all, stay away from the politically dostrinaire and the fairies and needles crowd.

Don't kid yourself on the prospects. I did the rough chapters you read, got immediate editorial approval and liking and policy rejection. And it was a more commercially-acceptable approach that you will take. I think commercial acceptability for you will lie in scholarship that can be so touted.

And I think a study of the FBI under stress and political compulsions can go.

Much as I want to get back to writing, that day is not close. There are too many urgent needs, including survival and attempting to get some of what is owed me. Then I can't just quit the Ray/King case, much as I want to. It had taken great hunks of time and has also wasted much.

Best,